

NOTES FROM THE:

Financial Management Career Program

by Mr Ron Stuewe



Career Enhancement Plan (CEP). It's that time of year again when all career program registrants are supposed to fill out a CEP. You should have received a CEP from your servicing Civilian Personnel Flight (CPF). The CEP is used to relay training available through the FMCP that will benefit the career program registrant. The registrant and their immediate supervisor should confer and complete the CEP jointly. Once completed, the document is returned to the servicing CPF for input into the Required Training Area (RTA) in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS).

Often times the CEP is confused with an Individual Development Plan (IDP). Personnel in acquisition positions are required to have an IDP. While the individual and their supervisor should prepare both, the main (and very important) difference is that the IDP remains only with the supervisor. The FMCP has no access or visibility into the entries on an IDP. Since the CEP is entered into the DCPDS, the FMCP can extract the data, which then becomes the list of candidates for available courses for the next fiscal year. In essence, if it is not on the CEP, the FMCP has no idea what courses you and your supervisor feel you should attend.

The types of courses that should be listed on the CEP include OPM courses supported by the FMCP Training and Development Panel, Tuition Assistance, and other FMCP sponsored short-term courses. These courses are identified on the FMCP homepage to help registrants find out what courses are anticipated for the next fiscal year. Acquisition courses are only available through the Acquisition Training Office that supports your location. The FMCP does not own courses or schedule personnel for these courses.

In the past, requests for long-term full-time training were also requested through the CEP. The USAF changed the nomination procedure and established the Civilian Competitive Development Program (CCDP). MAJCOM/CVs now receive a letter, normally in May, requesting they identify and recommend personnel in their command for long-term full-time training. This training also includes in-residence training at Air Command and Staff College, Air War College, and the Industrial College

of the Armed Forces. The FMCP currently has registrants attending each of these prestigious courses.

Tuition for off-duty college courses is available through the FMCP. Indicating tuition assistance on the CEP helps the FMCP justify annual budgets and to anticipate needs. Individual requests must still be submitted for individual courses and each must be mission related. DoD is considering increasing the availability of tuition assistance; however, until we receive implementing guidance, we must adhere to the latest USAF policy on the Civilian Tuition Assistance Program (CTAP).

Selection for some training courses requires an application or a nomination package. Courses such as the Aero Space Basic Course (ABC), Squadron Officer School (SOS), Financial Management Staff Officer Course (FMSOC), and the Professional Military Comptroller School (PMCS) are normally based on individual nominations submitted in response to calls for nominations through command focal points.

Additional information on the CCDP, CTAP, and other training opportunities for civilian career program registrants can be found at: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/guide/>. If you have not reviewed the guide lately, we highly recommend you review the contents and take advantage of these training opportunities.

Professional Certifications. In my travels I have heard a lot of discussion about professional certifications. Many people complain that they should not have to pay for certifications. Some say the tests are too hard and require a lot of study. It is true that certifications do cost some money, and the Comptroller General has ruled that this must be a personal expense, so you have to determine if it is worth your time and expense.

Professional certifications constitute documented evidence of your technical competence and initiative. Supervisors look for such qualifications when reviewing applicants for promotion or further development. What better way to demonstrate your expertise and set yourself apart from the over 4,600 registrants by showing you really have what it takes to get certified.